

NOTICE.

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CHEMISTS.

By Appointment to His Excellency the Go-

VERNOR and His Royal Highness the

DUKE OF EDINBURGH.

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DRUGGISTS.

PERFUMES.

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SHIPS' MEDICINE CHESTS REFITTED.

PASSENGER SHIPS SUPPLIED.

NOTICE.—To avoid delay in the execution of

Orders it is particularly requested that all

business communications be addressed to the

Firm A. S. Watson & Co., or

HONGKONG DISPENSARY.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications on Editorial matters should be

addressed "The Editor," and those on business "The

Manager," and not to individuals by name.

Correspondents are requested to forward their names

and address with communications addressed to the

Editor, not for publication, but as evidence of good

faith.

All letters for publication should be written on one

side of the paper only.

Advertisements and Subscriptions which are not

ordered for a fixed period will be continued until

countermanded.

Orders for extra copies of this Daily Press should

be sent before 11 a.m. on the day of publication.

After that hour the supply is limited.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, DECEMBER 29th, 1934.

The additional particulars which have come to hand concerning the outbreak in Korea leave no doubt as to the origin of the disturbances. It commenced with the progressionists, who, irritated by the opposition of the reactionary party and the avowed desire of some members of that faction to place the Kingdom under direct Chinese control, and chafing at the presence of Chinese soldiers in the capital, had determined to strike a blow for the supremacy, and with this view included the four commanders of the native troops in their list of victims. It is to be regretted that the party, which under ordinary circumstances would have commanded the sympathy of all foreigners, should have been so ill-advised as to resort to the desperate and unworthy expedient of assassination. We do not, however, for one moment credit the accusations made, in some quarters, against the Japanese of instigating and supporting such a coup d'état as that attempted on the 4th inst. at Seoul. In the first place it is quite opposed to the conciliatory policy which Japan has steadily pursued in Korea; in the second, it is the highest degree unlikely that the Japanese Government, which had just forgone an indemnity demanded for an outrage committed on their Legation in Seoul two years before, would countenance a movement so certain to provoke another outbreak; and in the third place, had such a course ever been meditated by the Japanese Ministers they certainly would not have withdrawn a portion of the Legation guard, as was done some time ago. But, quite independently of these obvious prudential considerations, we are satisfied that Japan would not connive in such a deplorable plot as that which involved the murder of nearly all the Korean Ministers of State because they still upheld the old policy of seclusion. The Japanese may not always have been discreet in their intercourse with the Koreans, and may have desired to urge on progress a little too fast, but they have shown a genuine desire to aid their neighbour and secure her independence.

With regard to the collision between the Japanese and Chinese soldiers and the massacre of Japanese merchants and residents in Seoul, it seems pretty clear that the Commander of the Chinese troops is mainly responsible for these events. It may be, and there seems reason to believe, that the encounter between the respective garrisons would never have taken place had not the Japanese been posted in the Royal Palace as guard to the King. His Majesty, evidently not trusting his own Korean guard, sent to Mr. Takekura, requesting assistance, and after consideration the Japanese Minister despatched one hundred of the Legation guard to the Palace. As the Japan Mail says, commenting on this action, in complying with the King's application Mr. Takekura "had no reason to doubt either the propriety or the legality of the cause he espoused. His knowledge of what had preceded the request was probably limited to the facts that a collision had occurred between the two parties; that the progressionists had secured a temporary advantage, and that the Palace was in danger of an attack by the seclusionists; while his conception of the position must have been, 'that in aid of protecting the King against the consequences of his liberalism was to promote the interests of civilization, and to strengthen the hands of those with whom all foreigners must sympathise.' The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the new Commander of the Korean troops, who are both violently anti-foreign, are suspected of having used their influence to bring about this collision between the troops. The Japanese soldiers were entrusted with the task of guarding the Palace building itself, and the gates and enclosure were garrisoned by Korean troops. The Chinese General addressed a communication to the Japanese announcing his intention of sending his troops to guard the Royal Palace, but this letter seems to have arrived either subsequent to or simultaneous with the writer's force. The progressionist officers who had assumed the leadership of the Korean troops would seem to have at once disputed the advance of the Chinese, and some shots were exchanged, but the Korean soldiers soon made common cause with the invaders and the Japanese had to fight their way through and retreat to the Legation. Now that building was destroyed by fire, and the Japanese were compelled to retire from the capital and make their way to Chemulpo, already a matter of history. The Chinese General may not have entertained any deliberate intention of bringing about the unfortunate collision that occurred, and pro-

bably only desired to prevent, as he thought, the King from falling under the influence of the anti-Chinese faction. However that may be, little doubt can be felt that the Japanese acted prudently in retiring before more blood had been spilt, and great credit is due to Mr. Takekura for his calmness and moderation in presence of great exasperation and strong excitement.

Although matters as they stand have a rather ugly appearance, and pessimists look forward to hostilities between Japan and China as an inevitable consequence, we are disposed to agree with the Japan Mail in thinking there will be no serious complications. Our Yokohama contemporary says:—"The King of Korea, who is now at the Chinese camp, has given audience to Mr. Takekura, and assured him, in the presence of the Chinese General as well as of the United States Minister, that the friendship of Korea for Japan is unaltered, and that she is ready to make any reparation which the MIKADO may desire. The account with China may not be so easily settled, especially as the Korean Minister for Foreign Affairs is not likely to admit anything unfavourable to his party. The public will do well, however, to believe very little of the current rumours with regard to the despatch of Japanese troops and other measures of a like nature. The intentions of the Tokyo Cabinet are known to be entirely pacific, so much so that steps have been taken to control the utterances of the press, which, as may be supposed, showed a disposition to be exceedingly outspoken on the subject of China's conduct." This latter fact is an unmistakable proof of the pacific disposition of the Japanese Government and of their desire to come to an amicable settlement of the new difficulty which has been created by the reversion of their troops with the Chinese soldiers at Seoul. As will be seen by the telegram published in another column, Count Inoue Kaoru, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been appointed High Commissioner to the Court of Seoul, and left for Korea on the 22nd inst., escorted by the corvette Kango. It is probable that the departure of Count Inoue Kaoru was what was meant by our recent telegram from Shanghai, which stated that Japanese troops, number unknown, had left for Korea. No troops would seem to have been despatched from Japan to Korea, and it is evident that the Japanese Government, in entrusting the investigation of the outbreak to such able hands as those of Count Inoue, are determined to avoid a quarrel with Peking if it is possible. We believe that the Chinese Government are no less desirous of arriving at a peaceful solution of the difficulty, but it is, of course, more especially their interest to avoid war.

The P. & O. steamer *Tamara*, with the next outward English mail, left Singapore at 5 p.m. on Friday for Port.

The General Managers (Messrs. Jardine, Matheson & Co.) inform us that the *Yala*, China S. N. Co.'s steamer *Tsuisu*, from Calcutta, left Singapore for Port on Saturday.

A report by the Government Astronomer on magnetic observations made during the year 1934 is published in the *Gazette*.

A biography of the late Mr. P. A. de Costa has been written in the Portuguese language by Mr. J. M. de Jesus, and has been published in pamphlet form.

Mr. W. Donald Spano has been appointed to replace Mr. W. Gregory, H. M. S. Consul at Tientsin, and he left Amoy for his post in the *Champion* on the 17th inst.

Two Japanese merchants lately sailed for Kobe for Korea for the purpose of getting a concession for a railway between Chemulpo and Seoul. The reason for this, however, will probably be to do their business.

The *Strait Times* says that H. R. H. Prince Osei, who is said to be a Chinese, has been sent to Bangkok, presented His Majesty the King of Siam with the grand cordon of the most noble order of St. Alphonse, and the King, in return, presented the Prince with the grand cordon of the Crown of Siam.

Three first-class cruises, the *Maple*, *Lo Perouse*, and *Prinzeval*, are to be fitted out to sail to French waters in Chinese waters. They carry each fifteen guns, six 6 in. and nine 5 in., and are manned by 250 men. They are all constructed of wood, and have a maximum speed of fifteen knots, and are the same style as the *Villars* and *D'Enting*.

The *Mercury* hears from Chemulpo that on the 24th inst. the steamer *Capitaine Maréchal* was in port, one Japanese schooner, four Japanese junks, five Chinese junks, and about forty-five Korean junks. The steamers *Chosun Maru* and *Yong Maru*, with passenger cargo, were heavily laden with goods of the rebellion, and there was said to be a brisk trade carried on at Chemulpo.

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We are requested to state that, as the Ball at Government House on the 21st inst. in aid of the celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday, all gentlemen entitled to uniform are requested to wear it.

A shipment of 200 tons of torpedoes has been despatched from Woolwich Arsenal to the Royal Albert Dock on board the transport ship *Albatross*. The ship will take out with the consignment ten miles of dynamite wire.

The *Amoy Gazette* says that Don Enrique Gaspar, who is said to be a Chinese, has been sent to Bangkok, presented His Majesty the King of Siam with the grand cordon of the most noble order of St. Alphonse, and the King, in return, presented the Prince with the grand cordon of the Crown of Siam.

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